

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF
POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART.

Fourth Series

CONDUCTED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS.

No. 362.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 3, 1870.

PRICE 1½d.

GLIMPSES OF A RUSSIAN PRISON.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART I.

'THERE are two sights which always make me shudder,' remarked to us, not long since, one of the bravest of men—the inside of a hospital, and the outside of a prison.' It may be that in the last words lies a deep significance; that the petrified embodiment of human justice and human rigour, in its stony and lifeless repose—without voice, without conscience, without feeling—is even more dreary and terrible than all the animate forms of guilt and misery that swarm within. But whether such a feeling springs from a preconceived aversion to the place itself, or is in some measure owing to its material surroundings, may be determined by those who care to accompany us on our proposed survey.

It must be admitted that to the mere sentimentalist there is what he would call 'a lamentable want of romance' about the modern prison. State dungeons, indeed, may acquire a gloomy grandeur from the very deeds which pollute them. The ancient towers of Berkeley and Pontefract were dignified by the associations of a terrible tragedy. The tremendous historical significance of the hideous crimes which stained the Tower of London has preserved it from the contempt, while consigning it to the hatred of posterity. Through the whole history of the Bastille runs a Titanic intensity of terror, a colossal power of agony and despair, which, by its very vastness, extorts a strange and terrified admiration. But when we turn from the criminals of history to those of common life, we find that, in spite of Bar and Press, sensational novelists and rabid 'friends of humanity,' every attempt to invest them with a romantic interest fails lamentably. Even in Russia, where the coarse appetite of a semi-civilised people still finds matter of enjoyment in hideous and revolting catastrophes, crime is being rapidly stripped of its greatest attraction—the element of impenetrable mystery. The rigorous and searching investigations inaugurated by the new system of

justice have broken into the deeper mysteries of metropolitan life, and brought to light, like a torch lowered into a charnel-vault, rank after rank of hideous objects hitherto unseen and unknown: tomb-like streets, into which men have wandered, and have never come back; black sluggish canals, hiding the tell-tale secret of midnight murder; noisome dens, grimy with filth, and savage in decay, where skulking ruffians carouse over their booty; men without manly courage, women without womanly feeling, children without childlike innocence—the dry bones of crime in all its hideous rottenness, unclothed with the flesh of romance, and unvivified by the breath of sentimentalism. It must be a startling revelation for those who have seen only the outside of St Petersburg—its stately palaces and gorgeous churches, its polished society, its splendid pageants, and showy lackered civilisation—to learn that beneath that smooth, glittering surface lie fathomless depths of misery, and black abysses of crime, such as few of the world's capitals can equal; and that under the shadow of the golden dome of the Isaac Cathedral, men cut each other's throats for a few pieces of copper, and women strangle their own children to save a day's sustenance for themselves. Such details, however, revolting as they are, serve at least one good purpose—that of painting vice in its true colours. In these days of worshipped immorality and deified crime, when the fashionable literature of Europe is fast transforming itself into a kind of 'Crime for the Young,' or 'Murder made Easy,' it is no light benefit to society to have rogues and villains depicted as they are, and as they will be in the eyes of all, when the gloss of novelty shall have worn off. For, happily, even the attraction of guilt cannot last for ever. Tomas and Cartouche, Dick Turpin and Jerry Abershaw, have long since been taken down from the glorified gibbet whereon they were pecked to pieces by ravenous penny novelists and sensational playwrights; and even the once famous Jack Sheppard retains but a shadow of his former immortality:

He left the name at which the town grew pale,
To point a novel, or adorn a jail.

190436

The first glimpse of our St Petersburg prison is not particularly impressive. Sauntering along the Officerski Street, we come at length into the vast open square which encloses the two great theatres, and see beyond it, on the opposite bank of the Catherine Canal, a large, oblong, grayish-white building of inconsiderable elevation, which might at first sight pass for an old warehouse, a second-rate market, or a local barrack; for its long low front and quadrangular form harmonise well with any one of these hypotheses, the only incongruous feature being the corpulent towers which round off the angles of the structure. But as we approach, the rusty gratings which defend the windows, the low beetle-browed doors clamped and studded with iron, the vigilant sentries stationed at every corner of the building, tell their own tale; and the ill-omened edifice, disdaining further concealment, lifts its low forehead, and peers at us through its countless ranges of half-shut eyes, with the sullen unabashed stare of a soulless ruffian.

But it is after nightfall that this gloomy neighbourhood wears its dreariest aspect, and its material surroundings most fully assume their terrible significance. Then, like the river of evil name which girdled the classic world of shadows, the thick pulseless waters of the canal divide the living from the dead. On one side are light and life, flaring gas-lamps, rattling carriages, and bustling crowds; the shining fronts of the great theatres, and the glittering throngs which stream into them; on the other, gloom, chillness, solitude—a dreary and desolate silence, a spot with a hideous personality of its own, gloomy, void, ghastly as the last day of a wasted existence, darkened by the deepening shadows of the grave, while, afar off, the dazzle and glow of life fade in the dim distance and disappear for ever.

At this point, my reverie is broken by the voice of my guide (one of the under-officers of the prison), who points out to me the principal gate of the building, above which stand the rudely carved figures of two angels, cross in hand, as if guarding the entrance. Involuntarily, I glance from them to the hard faces of the gray-coated sentinels; and at that moment, as if in answer to my thoughts, a clear rich voice comes floating down from one of the upper windows, singing the following words in that weird plaintive cadence which, in all ages, has been the characteristic of Russian music—the wail of an oppressed people sending up its unspoken prayer to the God and Father of all:

Where everlasting shame hath fixed its dwelling,

Above, two angels hover, cross in hand;

Below, their rounds with measured paces telling,

Watch the armed sentries o'er the prisoned band.

Gloomy and grim within. Beyond the grating

Are life, and liberty, and hope of gain;

But that dull tramp in cadence unabating

Repeats for aye: 'Remain, remain, remain!'

'Yes, he sings rather well, that lad,' says the official, with the air of a man praising his pet canary; 'and it's his own song too: he made the words, and the music, and everything; and it's quite a favourite among the prisoners by this time.'

'What is he here for?' ask I.

'Murder,' responds my cicerone, with a relishing emphasis upon the word. 'He cut his wife's throat while she was asleep, and then gave himself up to the police. He said he did it because he couldn't bear to see her starve; but they all say that sort of

thing, you know,' adds the man in office, with a smile of pitying contempt upon his flinty face. 'They'll send him off to Siberia before long; but I'll get him to copy me that song before he goes, for it's rather a good one.'

Our conversation is here cut short by the rumble of wheels, and up to the gate rolls heavily a black coffin-shaped vehicle, with one small grated window, which any man in St Petersburg would name at a glance. The prison van is about to discharge its load. The heavy door turns on its hinges with a long wailing groan, and we enter in the train of the *fourgon*, which is instantly surrounded by three or four of the prison warders. The official coffin is thrown open, and the socially dead come forth. Three of its four occupants have the heavy features and sullen expressionless look of the lower order of criminals, the unrefined ore of guilt—men too brutalised to shrink from crime, and too unreasoning to dread retribution. But the fourth is of another order. His features, though worn and haggard, are not without traces of beauty; his bearing is that of one who, however fallen, still preserves the memory of his first estate; and the look of loathing with which he shrinks from his foul companions, and the slight shudder that distorts his face as he passes under the fatal archway, speak volumes. While the turnkey gropes about the interior of the van, in the hope of detecting tobacco, brandy, cards, or some other forbidden article, my chaperon turns into a small room on the right side of the passage (whither the prisoners have already been conducted), and addresses a few words to a short, keen-eyed man in an undress uniform, whom I rightly guess to be the prison secretary. The latter steps forward with a polite bow, and informs me that I am at liberty to inspect the wards, and that one of the turnkeys shall be sent along with me as soon as the new arrivals are disposed of. He then glances over the papers forwarded along with them, and puts the usual question: 'Have you any property upon you?'*

'Nothing at all,' reply three voices with great readiness. The young man remains silent.

'Search them!' orders the sceptical official; and the command is instantly obeyed. Of the three recusants, the first appears to have spoken truly, his pockets being perfectly empty; the second yields up a roll of tobacco, and the third a small pocket-knife. On the younger prisoner are found a lead pencil, two or three sheets of paper, a piece of cord, and an old portemonnaie, containing a one-rouble note and six kopecks† in copper; all which articles, with the exception of the copper-money, are registered, and left under the charge of the secretary.

'To the second ward!' says the official to the turnkey in attendance; and then adds, in answer

* Of the money brought into the jail by a prisoner, he is allowed to retain only such an amount as may be less than a rouble (about 2s. 6d. at the present rate of exchange); but the rules permit him to draw a small sum weekly for such necessities as bread, tea, &c. The sale of liquor is strictly prohibited; but in spite of all precautions, the forbidden article is so largely introduced by clandestine means, that scenes of intemperance are of almost daily occurrence. Prisoners assure me that, with a licensed sale, drunkenness would be far less prevalent; but as it is, you know, we do it all the more because it's forbidden.

† A kopeck is the hundredth part of a rouble, or one-third of a penny.

to my inquiring look: 'We have four wards, each of which is for a separate class. On the ground floor are beggars and vagrants of every description. The second ward is reserved for serious offences, such as murder, forgery, coining, robbery with violence, and the like. Above this are the prisoners arrested on suspicion of petty offences, but not yet tried; and the fourth ward is for young pick-pockets, receivers of stolen goods, and the like.'

'And do none of them ever contrive to escape?' ask I.

'Very seldom: the sentries are a pretty good assurance against that. Still, one or two *do* manage to slip away occasionally; and the curious thing is, they try to manage it so that some unpopular warder may be on guard that day, and get the blame, for some of the men are much better liked by them than others. If an escape occurs during the night, the officer of the watch is answerable; if in the daytime, the blame falls upon the turnkeys. But here comes your guide; and, as he's a great favourite with the prisoners, and knows them all by heart, he'll be just what you want.'

In marches a tall, fine-looking man, in a plain dark uniform—apparently a retired soldier, and far from a young one, as his white hair and moustache testify; but the clear bright eye, the firm mouth, and bold aquiline profile, give a look of power to the old man's face that would not misbecome a general: yet his expression is gentle as a child's. He makes his salute, and awaits his orders, which are, to take me over the prison, and to answer any questions that I may wish to ask.

Away, then, we go, across the great court of the prison, in the midst of which stands a small dovecot, set up, if the prison tradition may be relied upon, at the personal expense of one of the 'respectable' inmates, for the diversion of his less fortunate brethren, whose melancholy faces may be seen peering through the gratings, here and there, as we pass. The court, which is enclosed by a strong wooden palisade more than twelve feet high, surmounted by a double row of spikes, is divided into a number of little gardens, paled off from each other, which form the solitary means of recreation officially granted to the prisoners. My old man looks kindly at the little spots, and remarks that 'they're a great comfort to the poor fellows who have not been long here yet: when the flowers come peeping up from the earth, it's just as if their children were coming to see them.' And it is not without regret that we turn from this primitive playground to the gloom of the long, low, chilly-looking corridor which leads to the first ward—that allotted to the vagrants.

(To avoid digressions, I may as well mention here that the four classes of prisoners, dressed alike in the coarse gray frock which is the uniform of the jail, are distinguished—the beggars in the first ward by a red collar, the graver criminals in the second by a black one, those confined on suspicion by a blue, and the inmates of the fourth or highest tier by a yellow collar.)

My chaperon unlocks a heavy door, and we find ourselves in the Vagrant Ward, a long low chamber lighted by a single window, through the heavy grating of which shimmers a pale and melancholy light. The room is tenanted by twenty or thirty men, all more or less ragged and emaciated, and marked almost to a man with that air of stolid apathy which is the birthright of the Russian men-

dicant. Some are coiled up in corners, fast asleep; others lean against the wall, and stare vacantly before them; five or six are grouped over a game of draughts in the centre of the room, their eager looks and excited gestures contrasting strongly with the apathy of the rest; while a few are pacing to and fro like caged beasts of prey. But the grating of the rusty hinges draws all eyes to the door, and a clamorous welcome bursts forth.

'Good-morning, Father Ivan; we were beginning to fear that we shouldn't see you to-day!'

'Have you brought us any more stories? Kouzma Oblako here knows how to read, and he'll read them to us.'

'We're going to get up a little carnival to-night—will you come and see it?'

'Gently, lads, gently!' interposes Ivan, waving them back: 'make room for this foreign barin, who has come to pay you a visit.'

The presence of an unprofessional visitor is a novelty to these outcasts, who survey me at first with a not over-friendly curiosity; but the consignment of a few kopecks to the hands of my conductor, for their benefit, raises me greatly in the public estimation, and there is a general murmur of uncouth thanks. Exchanging a few words with two or three of them, and casting a passing glance at the absorbed draught-players (who have already returned to their game with true Russian fervour), I am about to depart, when one of the sleepers in the farther corner uncoils himself, and slowly raises his head, disclosing a face which arrests me as if spell-bound. I have seen in my time many savage and brutal countenances, bearing in every line the indelible print of crime and degradation; but in these there was at least *life*, though of an evil kind. The other faces in the room are coarse and repulsive, and clouded with sullen apathy; but in each and all there is still some expression—some trace of that *soul* which makes the great line of demarcation between man and brute. Any of these, however hideous, would be preferable to what I now look upon. The features, though somewhat heavy, and roughened by hardship and exposure, are in themselves not unpleasing; but over the whole face lies a dreadful *blankness*—an absolute want of the impress of humanity—which gives to its possessor the aspect, not of an idiot, but of an animal—not of one in whom the powers of mind have been destroyed, but of one in whom they have never existed.

As he settles himself again into his place, an indefinable impulse prompts me to cross the room and address him.

'Well, brother, what are you here for?'

'I was begging,' answers the man in a flat tuneless voice, terribly consonant with his lifeless physiognomy.

'Are you from the country?'

'Yes.'

'And what brought you to Petersburg?'

'To look for work—there was none to be got at the village.* I worked here for a bit, till I'd saved twenty-five roubles, and then I thought of going home again. But when I got down to the station,

* 'F' derevnay'—at the village—is the Russian phrase for 'in the country.' I have thought it best to translate this man's narrative into tolerably correct English, without attempting to preserve the phraseology; for to give an exact translation of the peculiar slang in which he spoke, would be literally impossible.

there was a great crowd, and in the crowd my money got stolen. I couldn't go back with nothing, so I staid here.'

'Have you got a wife?'

'Yes; but she's down at the village somewhere. I'm better without her: two eat more than one.'

'And how did you live after your money was stolen?'

'I got a day's work here, and a day's work there; and sometimes I had work for two days or a week together; and somehow I managed to scrape on.'

'And what drove you to begging?'

'I fell ill while I was working in a wood-yard on one of the canals; and when the master saw it, he said: "You'll be no use to us now, and we can't be bothered with sick fellows here; be off with you!" So I went'—

'Where to?'

'Into the bushes.'

'What bushes?'

'The bushes down by the Moskovski Barrier; there are plenty of them there.'

'And ill all the time?'

'Yes, rather bad; but I lived through it.'

'But where did you sleep, then?'

'In the bushes, the same as in the daytime. I'd a pretty thick sheepskin frock, and when I got well into the bushes, and rolled myself up close, I could sleep well enough.'

'But what had you to eat?'

'Well, I didn't care to eat much then; but sometimes I crept out on the high-road, and got a kopeck or two from the people who passed; and then I would buy a roll of bread at a little shop close by, and that would serve me for a day, or perhaps two. I found berries, too, here and there; and then I used to eat grass sometimes. When I got better, I came out of the bushes; but I wasn't strong enough to work, so I took to begging: and for that they brought me here.'

'How long were you in the bushes, then?'

'Not very long—about six weeks altogether.'

'And how do you like being here?'

'Very well. I've got plenty to eat, and I can sleep as much as I like. What more could I want?'

What, indeed? The question is a fit ending to this brief and graphic epitome of a lifetime. The cool, matter-of-course way in which this man tells his frightful story, shews that he at least has no conception of having suffered any extraordinary hardship. True, he has been robbed, starved, cast out of doors in his sickness like a dog, forced to eat grass, and burrow in a thicket like a hunted wolf; and, finally, imprisoned for trying to sustain life by begging; but what then? 'There's nothing to be done: we must just bear it'; the motto of poor Russia for many a dismal century. What to such a being as this is arrest or imprisonment, when it enables him to enjoy at leisure the only happiness which he knows—a full measure of food and sleep. To him there is but one evil—that of want; but one good—that of intoxication. A terribly simple and consistent creed is his—a melancholy and hideous travesty upon that of Bürger's heart-broken heroine:

To be with brandy, that's my heaven;
Without it, that's my hell!

* In the original:

Mit ihm zu sein, ist Himmel mir;
Und ohne Wilhelm, Hölle!

—Bürger's *Lenore*.

I breathe more freely on finding myself once more in the corridor, and hearing Ivan's cheerful voice say, as he locks the door: 'I'm glad you've been to see them, barin; they always seem pleased somehow when anybody takes notice of them.'

'And you, brother, seem to be a great favourite with them,' remark I.

'Well, perhaps I am; but that's because I don't knock them about, or call them pigs, and dogs, and devil's sons, like some of the other turnkeys. When I was in the service, I never could bear to stab a man as he lay wounded, as some of my comrades used to do; and to bully these poor fellows who can't help themselves is every bit as bad.'

'But suppose you caught one of them trying to escape, what would you do then?'

The kindly look vanishes from the old soldier's face, and his whole countenance hardens like molten metal suddenly chilled, as he answers in a low stern voice: 'I'd kill him!'

Raising my eyes a minute later, I find myself at the door of the second ward, which is marked with the number '32.'

'That's the number of men in the ward,' explains Ivan, in answer to my inquiring look. 'When the doors are opened in the morning, we look through every room to see if the numbers tally; and if not, the alarm is given.'

We enter, and I instantly remark that the inmates, as compared with those on the ground floor, present a striking variety of type and expression. The vagrants in the lower ward, being for the most part Russians, and, moreover, Russians of a particular class, bear, as I have already mentioned, a generic resemblance to each other; but here the facial panorama is curiously diversified. The wrinkled, shrunken visages of toothless old men figure side by side with the smooth faces of lads of eighteen or twenty. The broad placid countenance of the German faces the scowling low-browed Tartar; and the dark complexion and gaunt frame of the southern Russian appear side by side with the squat, yellow-haired Finn. Here, wrapped in a heavy stupor-like slumber, lies the burly figure of an Estonian, taken red-handed in a daring burglary; there, in a dark corner, lurk the sharp rat-like eyes and strongly marked features of a Riga Jew, widely noted as a coiner. Several of the inmates are staking their rations of bread on a game of draughts; others, squatted in a circle upon the floor, are listening eagerly to an interminable and apparently unmeaning story, recounted by a jolly-looking man with a long brown beard (newly arrived from Viborg), who, having signalled his first week in town by fracturing his new master's skull with a log of wood, is now awaiting his trial.* One of his most attentive listeners is a dwarfish gnome-like creature, with a huge shaggy head, and small, yellow, wolfish eyes, whose handcuffs shew that he is already condemned, and awaiting his transmission to Siberia; his crime being the murder of his master (a Russian merchant living on the Ostrov) under circumstances of peculiar atrocity.

Beside the window sits a youth of nineteen, with his arms folded, and his head bowed dreamily on his breast. Of all the faces grouped around,

* This man was transported for life to Eastern Siberia, about a month after my visit.

his is the most remarkable. The almost childlike expression of the delicate profile and soft brown eye is contradicted by a mouth absolutely startling in its rigidity—small, thin-lipped, and hard, as if cut in granite—the mouth of one without fear, without faith, without mercy. The upper face is that of a child to whom crime itself is unknown; the lower, that of a man capable of any crime upon earth. It is the countenance of a cherub blended with that of a bandit.

'Who is that?' ask I tentatively. 'Surely he can't have done anything very serious?'

'You mustn't judge by their faces, barin,' answers Ivan with a meaning smile: 'that is Vaska Bouslaieff,* who murdered that whole family in the Torgóvaya the other day. You've heard of him, of course?'

I have indeed (in common with my entire acquaintance) heard only too much of the hero of this frightful tragedy, with which all Petersburg is still ringing; and thus do I suddenly find myself face to face with him.

'You know my name, then?' says the prisoner with a smile.

'Every man in Petersburg knows it now,' answer I; 'it has been in every mouth for the last fortnight.'

'So I suppose,' he rejoins with a complacent air. 'When I was a student at Kiev, they used to tell me that I should never make my name heard of; but apparently they were mistaken, after all.'

Considering his present position, there is something at once terrible and revolting in the man's inordinate vanity, which betrays itself not merely in his words, but in the tone of his voice and the very pose of his figure—reminding me of one who was urged by the same passion to an equal crime—John Wilkes Booth.

'You have been a student, then?'

'Yes, for several years; but I didn't distinguish myself there. Perhaps,' he adds with a slight sneer, 'the good people there will be more ready to acknowledge me now.'

'And when are you to be tried?'

'I don't exactly know; but pretty soon now, I should think. It's all one to me, for I know how it must end; and, after all, Siberia's better than hanging. As we used to say at college: "From the land of Siberia one may escape; from the land of Mogeela" [the grave] "one can't."

'Don't talk so loud about escaping, brother,' interposes Ivan warningly; 'you forget that everything you say here is noted.'

'Note it, and welcome,' rejoins the prisoner with an air of indifference; 'I'd say it to their faces, if need were. If that hog of a boy hadn't screamed out as I stabbed him, I'd have escaped at the first; but it was the will of God that I should be taken.' And at the mention of the holy name, this red-handed exterminator doffs his cap, and crosses himself as devoutly as if he were before the altar of a church. Too sick at heart to be diverted by the hideous grotesqueness of the action, I turn hastily away, while the murderer resumes his seat with the air of a sovereign dismissing an ambassador.

Not the least remarkable thing about this man is the tacit but unmistakable ascendancy which he

exercises over his fellow-prisoners. In this rude society, his advantages of birth and education would avail him nothing—would, if anything, excite the spleen and hostility of his rougher companions; but the complicated atrocity of his guilt invests him in their eyes with a kind of weird grandeur. For them he is simply a consummate master of the art which they have all practised—one of the aristocracy of crime, before whose evil pre-eminence all must bow down in adoration.

'Terrible fellow that, barin,' says Ivan, as we quit the room together; 'only nineteen, and to have swept off five Christian souls! They say,' adds he in a low whisper, 'that he knows Latin and Greek as well as we know Russian; so it's no wonder he did what he did!'

This matchlessly characteristic observation comes very seasonably to arouse me from the train of gloomy reflection into which I had sunk. 'Why, brother, if that's all, I know Latin and Greek pretty well myself—well enough to read and write them at least.'

'Do you really, barin?' says Ivan, surveying me with a new interest, and with that air of doubtful admiration with which men approach a daring criminal. 'Do you really? Then may God mercifully preserve you from temptation!'

As we proceed gatewards (for I had seen quite enough, and decline visiting the third ward, where those detained on suspicion are confined), I take the opportunity of asking whether the prisoners seem tolerably contented on the whole.

'Most of them do,' answers Ivan; 'but that's because they've been here some time; for the new-comers it's dreadful at first. You see, they give them no work to do, and they've nothing to amuse them; so they get to doing all sorts of mischief. Only this spring, one of our warders was nearly killed by a great stone that fell within an inch of his head, as he passed under the windows; and when inquiry was made, it turned out that one of the lads in the second ward had betted fifty kopecks that he would kill with that stone the first man that crossed the yard within a fair distance.* And now, barin, here we come to the third ward, and you'll be likely to see something curious.'

BRED IN THE BONE.

CHAPTER XLV.—FACE TO FACE.

IF Solomon himself, half-starved and imbecile with despair, had suddenly presented himself from his living tomb, Richard could not have been more astonished than at the appearance of his present visitor. He had left her but two days ago for Midlandshire. How was it possible she had tracked him hither? With what purpose she had done so, he did not ask himself, for he had already read it in her haggard face and hopeless eyes.

'Have I come too late?' moaned she in a piteous, terror-stricken voice.

'For breakfast?—yes, madam,' returned Richard coldly; 'but that can easily be remedied; and he feigned to touch the bell. His heart was steel again; this woman's fear and care he felt were for his enemy, and for him alone. It was plain she had no longer fear of himself.

* This name is fictitious; but many in St Petersburg will easily recognise the description.

* Fact.

'Where is my husband?' she gasped out. 'Is he still alive?'

'I am not your husband's keeper, madam.'

'But you are his murderer!' She held out her arm, and pointed at him with a terrible significance. There was something clasped in her trembling fingers which he could not discern.

'You speak in riddles, madam; and it seems to me your humour is somewhat grim.'

'I ask you once more, is my husband dead, and have I come too late?'

'I have not seen him for some days; I left him alive and well. What makes you think him otherwise, or that I have harmed him?'

'This'—she advanced towards him, keeping her eyes steadily fixed upon his own—'this was found among your things after you left my house!'

It was a ticket-of-leave—the one that had been given to Balfour on his discharge from Lingmoor. It seemed impossible that Richard's colourless face could have become still whiter, but it did so.

'Yes, that is mine,' said he. 'It was an imprudence in me to leave such a token among curious people. You took an interest in my effects, it seems.'

'It was poor Mrs Basil who found it, and who gave it to me.' Her voice was calm, and even cold; but the phrase, 'poor Mrs Basil,' alarmed him.

'The good lady is still unwell, then, is she?'

'She is dead.'

'Dead!' Richard staggered to a chair, and pressed his hands to his forehead. The only creature in the world on whom his slender hopes were built had then departed from it! 'When did she die?' inquired he in a hollow voice, 'and how?'

'On the evening of the day you left, and, as I believe, of a disease which one like you will scarcely credit—of a broken heart.'

Her manner and tone were hostile; but that moved not Richard one whit; the cold and measured tones in which she had alluded to his mother's death angered him, on the other hand, exceedingly. If his mother had died of a broken heart, it was this woman's falsehood that had broken it; and yet she could speak with calmness and unconcern of the loss which had left him utterly forlorn! He forgot all his late remorse; and in his eyes glittered malice and cruel rage.

'I do not fear you,' cried she, in answer to this look; 'for the wretched have no fear. The hen will do battle with the fox, the rabbit with the stoat, to save her young. If I cannot save my husband, I will save my son. I have come down here to do it. You are known to me now for what you are—a jail-bird. If you dare to meet my Charley's honest face again, I will tell him who and what you are.'

'Did Mrs Basil tell you that, then?'

'Thus far she did,' cried Harry, pointing to the ticket which Richard had taken from her hand. 'Is not that enough? She warned me with her latest breath against you. "Beware of him," said she; "and yet pursue him, if you would save your husband and your son. Where Solomon is, there will this man also be. Pursue, pursue!" I did but stay to close her eyes.'

'And so she knew me, did she?'

'She knew enough, as I do. Of course, she could not guess—who could?—your shameful past, the fruit of which is there!' and again she pointed to the ticket.

'My shameful past!' cried Richard, rising and drawing himself to his full height. 'Who are you, that dare to say so? Do you then need one to rise from the dead to remind you of your past! Look at me, Harry Trevethick—look at me!'

'Richard!' It was but one word; but in the tone which she pronounced it a thousand memories seemed to mingle. An inexpressible awe pervaded her; she stood spell-bound, staring at his white hair and withered face.

'Yes, it is Richard,' answered the other mockingly, 'though it is hard to think so. Twenty years of wretchedness have worked the change. It is you he has to thank for it, you perjured traitress!'

'No, no; as Heaven is my judge, Richard, I tell you No!' She threw herself on her knees before him; and as she did so, her bonnet fell, and the rippling hair that he had once stroked so tenderly escaped from its bands; the colour came into her cheeks, and the light into her eyes, with the passionate excitement of her appeal; and for the moment she looked almost as he had known her in the far-back spring-tide of her youth.

'Fair and false as ever!' cried Richard bitterly.

'Listen, listen!' pleaded she, 'then call me what you will.'

He sat in silence while she poured forth all the story of the trial, and of the means by which her evidence had been obtained, listening at first with a cold cynical smile, like one who is prepared for falsehood, and beyond its power; but presently he drooped his head and hid his features. She knew that she had persuaded him of her fidelity, but feared that behind those wrinkled hands there still lay a ruthless purpose. She had exculpated herself, but only (of necessity) by shewing in blacker colours the malice of his enemies. She knew that he had sworn to destroy them root and branch; and there was one green bough which he had already done his worst to bend to evil ways. 'Richard, Richard!' said she softly.

He withdrew his chair with a movement which she mistook for one of loathing.

'He hates me for their sake,' thought she, 'although he knows me to be innocent. How much more must he hate those who made me seem so guilty!' But, in truth, his withdrawal from her touch had a very different explanation. He would have kissed her, and held out both his hands, but for the blood which he dreaded might be even now upon them. He saw that she loved him still, and had ever done so, even when she seemed his foe: all the old affection that he thought had been dead within him awoke to life, and yet he dared not give it voice.

'You have said my husband was alive and well, Richard?'

'I said I had left him so,' answered he hoarsely.

'Then you have spared him thus far; spare him still, even for my sake; and, for Heaven's sake, spare my son! Harden not your heart against one more dear to me by far than life itself. He has done you no wrong.'

Richard shook his head; he yearned to clasp her to his breast; he could have cried: 'I forgive them all,' but he could not trust himself to speak, lest he should say: 'I love you.'

'You have seen my boy, Richard, many times: the friendship you have simulated for him must have made you know how warm-hearted, and kind,

and unsuspecting his nature is; you have listened to his merry laugh, and felt the sunshine of his gaiety. Oh! can you have the heart to harm him?

Still he did not speak; he scarcely heard her words. The murdered man was standing between her and him; and he would always stand there, seen by him, though not by her. From the grave itself he had come forth to triumph over him to the end.

'Richard'—her voice had sunk to a tremulous whisper—'I must save my son, and save you from yourself, no matter what it costs me. You little know on the brink of what a crime you stand.'

He laughed a bitter laugh; for was he not already steeped in crime? She thought him pitiless and malignant when he was only hopeless and self-condemned.

'Do you remember Gethin, Richard, and all that happened there? Can you not guess why I was made to marry—within—what was it?—a month, a week, a day—it seemed but the next hour—after I lost you? You have had twenty years of misery for my sake; but so have I for yours. Did my husband love me, think you? Did he love my child? He had good cause, if he had only known, to hate us both. Can you not guess it?'

He looked at her with eager hope—a trembling joy pervaded him. But hope and joy had been strangers to him so long that he could scarce recognise them for what they were.

'My Charley is yours also, Richard—your own son.'

Richard burst into tears. There was somebody still to love him in the world—his own flesh and blood—somebody to live for! The thought intoxicated him with delight; a vision of happiness floated before him for an instant, then was swallowed up in darkness, as a single star by the gloom of night. His own flesh and blood; ay, perhaps inheriting the same nature as his father. It was only too likely, from what he had seen of the lad; and he had himself done his best to develop the evil in him, and to crush the good.

'Don't weep, dear Richard: kiss me.'

He shrank from her proffered lips with a cold shiver. 'Nay, I cannot kiss you. Do not ask me why, Harry. Never ask me; but I never can.'

She looked at him with wonder, for she saw that his wrath had vanished. His tone was tender, though woeful, and his touch as he put her aside was as gentle as a child's.

'As you please, Richard,' said she humbly, and with a deep blush. 'I only wished for it as a token of your forgiveness. It is not necessary; those tears have told me we are reconciled. But you will kiss Charley.'

'Nay; he must never know,' answered Richard gloomily.

'I had forgotten,' said Harry simply. 'You can guess by that the loyalty of my heart towards you, Richard. I forgot that to reveal it would be to tell my darling of his mother's shame. But you will be kind and good to him; you will undo what you have done of harm; you will lead him back to Agnes, and then he will be safe.'

'Yes, yes,' muttered Richard mechanically; 'I will undo so far as I can what I have done of harm. I will do my best, as I have done my worst.'

He rose hastily, and rang the bell. Harry eyed him like some attached creature that sympathises with, but cannot comprehend its master.

The waiter entered.

'I shall not go by the train,' said Richard: 'let a carriage and pair be brought round instantly, without a moment's delay.'

The waiter hurried out to execute the order.

'But you will surely return home, Richard, after what has happened?' said Harry, thinking of his mother's funeral.

'The dead can wait,' returned he solemnly. 'Go you back to town. In three days' time, if you do not hear from me, come down to Gethin with Charles and Agnes.'

'But I dare not, unless my husband send for me.'

'He will send for you,' said Richard solemnly; 'or others will in his behalf.'

Without one word or sign of farewell, he suddenly rushed by her and was gone. A carriage stood at the front-door of the hotel, which had just returned from taking a bride and bridegroom to the railway station, and she saw him hurry into it.

'Fast, fast!' she heard him cry, through the open window; and then he was whirled away.

CHAPTER XLVI.—CURTIUS.

Richard had many subjects for thought to beguile his lonely way to Gethin, but one was paramount, and absorbed the rest, though he strove to dismiss it all he could.

He endeavoured to think of his dead mother: his heart was full of her patient love and weary, childless life; but her portrait faded from his mind like a dissolving view, and in its place stood that of Solomon Coe, haggard, emaciated, hideous. Still less could he think of Harry and her son, between whom and himself this spectre of the unhappy man rose up at once, summoned by the thought of them, as by a spell. It did not occur to Richard even now that he had had no right to kill him; but he shuddered to think, if he had really done so, how this late opening flower of love which he had just discovered would blossom into fear and loathing. In that case, his heart would have been softened only to be pierced. His mother's death; the knowledge of Harry's fidelity, and of the existence of his son, to whom his affection had been already drawn, unknowingly and in spite of himself, had dissolved his cruel purpose. He was eager to spare his mother's memory the shame of the foul crime he had contemplated, and passionately anxious that in the veins of his new-found son there should at least run no murderer's blood.

'Faster, faster!' was still his cry, though the horses galloped whenever it was practicable, and the wheels cast the winter's mire into his eager face. This haste was made, as he well knew, upon the road to his own ruin. To find Solomon alive, was to be accused of having compassed his death. There was no hope in the magnanimity of such a foe. But yesterday, Richard had cared little or nothing for his own safety, and was only bent upon the prosecution of his scheme against his foe; now life had mysteriously become dear to him, and he was about to risk it in saving the man he had hated most on earth from the doom to which he had himself consigned him. He had calculated the possibilities which were in his own favour, and they had resolved themselves into this single chance—that Solomon might be induced,

by the unconditional offer of Wheal Danes and its golden treasure, to forego his revenge. His greed was great; but his malice, as Richard had good cause to know, was also not easily satiated. Moreover, even if his victim should decline to be his prosecutor, he would still stand in great peril. It was only too probable that he would be recognised at Gethin for the stranger that had so lately been staying at Turlock; he had not indeed mentioned his assumed name at the latter place; but his lack of interest in the fate of Solomon—whose disappearance had been narrated to him by the waitress—and his departure from the town under such circumstances, would (in case of his identification) be doubtless contrasted with this post-haste journey of his to deliver this same man. He had made up his mind, however, to neglect no precautions to avoid this contingency. It would be dark when he got to Gethin; and his purpose once accomplished, he might easily escape recognition, unless he should be denounced by Solomon himself. In that case, Richard was fully determined that he would glut no more the curiosity of the crowd. He would never stand in the prisoner's dock, or be consigned again to stone walls. The gossips should have a dead man's face to gaze at, and welcome; they might make what sport they pleased of that, but not again of his living agony. Then, instead of his being Solomon's murderer, he would be his victim. To judge by his present feeling, thought Richard bitterly, this man would not enjoy his triumph even then. Revenge, as his mother had once told him, was like a game of battledore—it is never certain who gets the last stroke. If Solomon was now dead, starved skeleton or rat-eaten corpse as he might be, Richard felt that he would still have had the advantage over him.

'What is it? Why are we stopping?' cried he frantically, as the man pulled up on the top of a hill.

'Let me breathe the horses for an instant,' pleaded the driver: 'we shall gain time in the end.'

'How far are we still from Gethin?' inquired Richard impatiently.

'In time, two hours, sir, for the road is bad, though me and the horses will do our best, but the distance is scarce twelve miles.—Do you see that black thing out to seaward yonder? That's the castled rock. He stands out fine against the sunset, don't he?'

'Yes, yes: make haste;' and on they sped again, at the gallop.

Within a mile or two of this spot, Richard had first caught sight of that same object twenty years ago. The occasion flashed upon him with every minutest circumstance, even to the fact of how hungry he had been at the moment. The world was all before him then, and life was young. Now, prematurely aged, his interest centred in three human beings; and one of those was his bitter enemy.

The dusk thickened into dark; and the tired horses, for the stage had been a very long one, made but slow way.

'Faster, faster!' was Richard's constant cry till the brow of the last hill was gained, and the scanty lights of Gethin shewed themselves. Then it suddenly struck him for the first time what unnecessary speed had been made. Why, this man

Solomon, strong and inured to privation, had, after all, been but eight-and-forty hours in the mine, and would surely be alive, unless the rats had killed him. Where had he somewhere read of a strong man overpowered in a single night by a legion of rats, and discovered a heap of clean picked bones by morning?

The inn, as usual at that season, shewed few signs of life; but there were some half-dozen miners drinking at the bar.

'Keep those men,' said Richard to the innkeeper, for Solomon had long delegated that office to another, though his own name was still over the door, and the *Gethin Castle* was still his home. 'I shall want their help to-night.'

'Their help, sir?' said the astonished landlord.

'Yes; but say nothing for the present. Bring me a bottle of brandy, and some meat—cold chicken, if you have it; then let me have a word with you.'

Richard did not order the food for himself. While it was being brought, he sat down in the very chair that he had used so often—for he had been ushered into his old parlour—and gazed about him. There were the same tawdry ornaments on the mantel-piece, and the same books on the dusty shelf. Nothing was altered except the tenant of that room, but how great a change had taken place in him! What a face the dingy mirror offered him, in place of that which it had shewn him last! When the innkeeper returned, his mind involuntarily conjured up old Trevechick, as he had received from him the key of the ruin, and doggedly taken his compliments upon its workmanship. Truly, 'there is no such thing as forgetting;' and to recall our past to its minutest details at the judgment-day, will not be so impracticable as some of us would desire.

Richard had made up his mind exactly as to what he would say to this man, but a question suddenly presented itself, which had been absent from his thoughts from the moment that he had resolved to rescue his enemy. It was a very simple one, too, and would have occurred to any one else, as it had done already many times to himself.

'Has Mr Coe been found yet?'

He listened for the answer eagerly, for if such was the case, not only was his journey useless, but had brought him into the very jaws of destruction. He would have thrown away his life for nothing.

'No, sir, indeed—and he never will be,' replied the innkeeper. 'When the sea don't give a man up in four-and-twenty hours, it keeps him for good—at least we always find it so at Gethin.'

'Well, listen to me. My name is Balfour. I knew Mr Coe, and have had dealings with him. We had arranged a partnership together in a certain mine; and it is my opinion that he came down here upon that business.'

'Very like, sir. He was much engaged that way, and made, they say, a pretty penny at it.'

'I was at Plymouth, on my way to join him, when I heard this sad news. I came to-day post-haste in consequence of it. The search for him must be renewed to-night.'

'Lor, sir, it is easy to see you are a stranger in these parts! I wouldn't like to go myself where poor Mr Coe met his end, on so dark a night as this. It's a bad path even in daylight along Turlock cliff.'

'He did not take that way, at least I think not. Have you a ladder about the premises?'

'Yes, sure.'

'And a lantern?'

'Now, that's strange enough, sir, that you should have inquired for a lantern; for we wanted one just now, to see to your horses, and though they're looking for it high and low, it can't be found nowhere.'

'It doesn't strike you, then, that Mr Coe might have taken it with him?'

'Lor, sir,' cried the innkeeper, with admiration, 'and so he must ha' done!—Of course it strikes one when the thing has been put into one's head. Well, 'twas a good lantern, and now 'tis lost. Dear me, dear me!'

Golden visions of succeeding to the management of the inn, and of taking to the furniture and fixings in the gross, had flitted across this honest gentleman's brain, and the disappearance of the lantern affected him with the acute sense of pecuniary damage. The general valuation would probably be no less because of the absence of this article.

'Send out and borrow another, as many, in fact, as you can get,' said Richard impatiently; 'and get ready a torch or two besides. Pick out four of the strongest men yonder, and bid them come with me, and search Wheal Danes.'

'What! that old pit, sir? You'll not find a man to do it, no, not if they'd knowed as master was at the bottom of it. You wait till morning.'

'Your master is at the bottom of it: I feel sure he took the lantern with him to search that mine. I will give them a pound apiece to start at once. Pack up this food; and lend them a mattress to bring him home upon. Be quick, be quick!'

Richard's energy fairly overpowered the phlegmatic innkeeper, whose conscience, perhaps, also smote him with respect to his missing master; and he set about the execution of these orders promptly. Wheal Danes, he had truly hinted, was a very unpopular spot with its neighbours after nightfall; but, on the other hand, sovereigns were rare in Gethin, and greatly prized. In less than half an hour the necessities which Richard had indicated were procured, and a party consisting of himself, four stalwart miners, and the innkeeper, started for the pit. These were followed by half the inhabitants of the little village, attracted by the rumour of their purpose, which had oozed out from the bar of the *Gethin Castle*. The windy down had probably never known so strange a concourse as that which presently streamed over it, with torch and lantern, and stood around the mouth of the disused mine. The night was dark, and nothing could be seen save what the flare of the lights they carried shewed them, a jagged rim of pit without a bottom. Notwithstanding their numbers, there was but little talk among them; they had a native dread of this dismal place, and besides, there might now be a ghastly secret hidden within it. A muffled exclamation, half of admiration, half of awe, broke from the circling crowd, as, the ladder planted, Richard was seen descending it torch in hand. No other man followed; none had volunteered, and he had asked for no companion: they watched him, as the countrymen of those who had formerly worked Wheal Danes might have watched Curtius when he leaped into the gulf; and as in his case, when they saw the ladder removed, and the light

grow dim, and finally die out before their eyes, it seemed that the pit had closed on Richard—that he was swallowed up alive. No one, unless the strange story about their missing neighbour which this man had brought was true, had ventured into Wheal Danes for these fifty years! They kept an awe-struck silence, straining eye and ear. Some thought they could still see a far-off glimmer; others, that they could hear a stifled cry, when the less fortunate or the less imaginative could hear or see nothing. But after a little, darkness and silence reigned supreme beneath them; they seemed standing on the threshold of a tomb.

SCOTLAND FROM AGRICOLA'S INVASION TO 1688.

THE fourth volume of Mr Hill Burton's great historical work brought his readers to the abdication of Queen Mary. He resumes his narrative with the Interregnum, the Regency of Murray, Mar, and Morton, the romantic and important incidents which accompanied its expiry, and the reign of James VI., from the king's majority to the league with England. The conclusion of Mr Hill Burton's task is worthy of its commencement; and, in some respects, the fifth, sixth, and seventh volumes are superior to their predecessors, if not in accuracy, detail, or clearness and justness of view, at least in warmth of tone and in picturesque effect. We have remarked* upon his manner of telling the story of the wretched royal lady who is destined to puzzle historians and students to all time, and has had as many partisans and as many enemies, has inspired as many faction-fights, since the head, which Mr Froude insists on investing with a wig, fell on the improvised scaffold at Fotheringay, as she had and inspired in her troubled lifetime. The truth can never be known; but out of all the controversy, largely added to since Mr Burton's task was undertaken, there comes more and more clearly this. If the casket letters be genuine, there is strong evidence of Mary's guilt in many respects, though not in all with which the furious rage and the prurient fancy of her contemporaneous and posthumous enemies have charged her—that would render her simply the most criminal and the most mad of all the criminal lunatics who have ever existed. If the casket letters be forgeries, there is no evidence worth considering against the queen. It would be wise for those who are only readers, not makers, of history to accept this puzzle as a puzzle, and to decline the polemic, in the interest of their own peaceful and intelligent following of events, which at least are clear and comprehensible in their sequence, be their origin ever so mysterious.

A great revolution had been accomplished, and when the confederates had disposed of 'their troublesome and dangerous mistress,' the leading men among them set to the task of organising a government. From this moment, the figure of Murray occupies a foremost position upon the crowded stage, and his character becomes a study of importance, apart from his much debated previous conduct to his unfortunate half-sister. The selection of Murray as the chief ruler of the

* See *Chambers's Journal*, under heading 'Scotland from Agricola's Invasion to 1688,' June 22, 1867. No. 182.

country, under the act which so strictly controlled the succession, was of evil import to the great house of Hamilton, which those concerned in the arrangements chiefly had to fear. Mr Burton puts the position thus forcibly: 'The distance between legitimacy and illegitimacy had widened since the days when the legitimacy of Robert III. was questioned, and left unsettled; but statesmanship had not, like the civil law, established that a bastard was counted the child of no father. In most of the courts of Europe, the illegitimate family took rank immediately after the legitimate; and at almost every great court there was a prince called the Bastard. Not long time had elapsed since one of this class nearly made himself king of Spain. More astounding things than the seizure of royal power had been accomplished by clever, courageous, and unscrupulous men, with Murray's opportunities; and Murray was both clever and courageous, whatever may be said about his scrupulosity. His call to the Regency was an admission of hereditary claim; it would not have been given had he been a private peer, unallied to the royal house. Had either of the Hamiltons, the father or the son, been a man of Murray's capacity, he would have taken the Regency, if not something more; but the only member of the house capable of strong action was the archbishop, and late events had made his influence far less than it was when he sneered at his brother for letting an infant live between him and the throne.'

Among the extraordinary treacheries and baseness of the story of those evil days, nothing is more curious and complicated than the treachery of the Hamiltons. They absented themselves from the coronation of the baby-king; they were the chief promoters of the project formed for the release of the queen, and the re-establishment of her rule; they were conspicuous as the leaders of 'the queen's party,' and yet they were discovered afterwards to be secretly working for her death. This category of crime was afterwards to receive its crowning item in the murder of the Regent Murray. The fondness of King James for the bungling duplicity he called 'king-craft,' the incapacity for telling the truth, or comprehending truth as an abstract virtue, seem less surprising when we think of the men who had the training of his mind, such as it was, and the political and social condition of Scotland when he began to be able to understand it. All the nobles and statesmen were conspirators; utter falsehood pervaded all public and private relations. The only account extant of Murray's interview with Mary at Lochleven, in which she was represented to have acquiesced in his being made Regent, is his own, and that it was accepted as true and sufficient by Throckmorton, is no very good proof to us of its truth. It is remarkable that at this period, full of revolution and violence, of passionate bigotry and oppression—for never was there a more frightful exhibition of both than in the political and religious crisis of this time—extreme formality, tedious and long-winded to an intolerable degree, encumbered every public act and occasion. The solemn inauguration of Murray as Regent was as cumbrous a business as the coronation of the infant in whose name, 'James, Prince, and Stewart of Scotland,' the Earl of Morton took an interminable oath. The documents of the period, the minutes, and the correspondence, are unbearably

circumlocutory: the reader ought to make a slight experience of them, if he would be adequately grateful to Mr Hill Burton for the admirable condensation of their contents he presents to him. Nowhere is this more noticeable than in the account of the immediate action taken by the foreign courts, the indifference with which the interference of France on behalf of the deposed queen was treated, and the politic withdrawal of Elizabeth when she found she had better leave Scotland to settle its own affairs. 'The history of fifty years earlier shews us,' says the writer, 'that had her father so threatened Scotland, he would have fulfilled his threat. There would have been the same relentless castigation, and the same dogged endurance. Whether Mary's life would have been sacrificed or not, the people of the country would have presented their old steady front against English aggression or dictation. It is anomalous enough, no doubt, to suppose the Protestant Scots bringing in the French Papists to aid them against their Protestant friends of England; but the strong current of nationality would have drifted to such a conclusion, and France and Scotland would have actually resumed the ancient league against England, still nominally existing.' A few years more, and Mary's life was to be taken by the sovereign who was afraid to interfere on her behalf, lest her subjects should invent a pretext for her murder, and the soundest and most enduring league known to history, that between Scotland and England, was to be made.

A turning-point in the history of both church and state occurred in 1567, when the legislative work of the Reformation, established in 1560, was confirmed, and the regular organisation of the Church of Scotland began. The proceedings of the Lords of Congregation, and the literary history of the Scottish Prayer-book, are very interesting in themselves, and particularly so because we get from Mr Burton, in their course, so vivid a description of John Knox. He gives a curious account of the 'spiritual songs' by which the doctrines of the Reformation were popularised among the people. Many of them have a horrible effect at present, and all an unpleasant one. The worst is that in which these verses occur, illustrating the destruction of the Church of Rome, under the figure of a 'cursed fox':

With huntis up, with huntis up,
It is now perfet day;
Jesus our King is gane a-hunting,
Quha lykis to speid they may.
Ane cursit fox lay hid in rox
This lang and mony ane day,
Devouring scheip, quhell he might creip,
Nane might him schaip away.

Perhaps this may have suggested the converse controversial image of the 'milk-white hind' to Dryden. When order was established, a little was done towards restoring external decency to the dismantled places of worship, whose disgraceful condition had been persistently denounced by the clergy.

Murray's government was essentially vigorous; and its home details, his dealings with the murderers of Darnley, his difficulties with the church and the holders of ecclesiastical estates, his administrative abilities, form an interesting study. But they are soon obscured by the reappearance of the queen's history. The news of her flight, the details

of her captivity, Lochleven and its inmates, the projects of escape, and the final success, the gathering at Hamilton, Murray's proceedings at Glasgow, the battle of Langside, Mary's marvellous ride concerning which she wrote to her uncle, the great cardinal, her residence at Carlisle, the flight to England, which has been denounced as cowardly folly, but was really the impulse of a hunted creature—all this wonderful romance of history is here admirably, briefly told. On English ground lay her immediate safety from the enemies who were hunting her in her own kingdom. There, at least, was respite—the means of saving her life until either France or England should come openly to her aid, or till she should know neither would do so. It has been asked why the fugitive queen did not go to France. The obvious reason was the distance, and the difficulty of the journey; but beyond this, Mr Burton's answer is conclusive: 'No doubt it was still one of the cherished policies of the French court to seize the first opportunity for re-establishing the old influence in Scotland, and so bridling England from the north. But if France would have then sent an army to help the queen in a struggle with her rebellious subjects, and suppressed England's projects of doing the like, this was something very different from the reception of a fugitive, who had been driven from her throne by a triumphant party, from which she fled for bare life, with the blot of infamous crimes upon her name. There was but little zeal for her cause in the court of France; while, on the other hand, there was the fixed hatred of that miracle of craft and cruelty, Catharine de' Medici. She was again supreme in France, and the headlong ferocity of her son was led to politic ends by her subtler intelligence. She was in friendly communication with Elizabeth, and had not yet revealed the great secret whether she was to be the friend or the enemy of the Huguenots. With this woman, Mary, at the climax of her career, when she was queen of France as well as of Scotland, had a hard game to play. What chance had she now?'

She had no chance then, or evermore; and at the point of her flight into England, she drops out of the history of Scotland proper, and her place is taken, first by Murray, then by his successors in the Regency, and ultimately by her son. The conference at York, the proceedings before the English nobles in that most extraordinary court ever assembled, wherein the nominal accuser was the actual defendant, and every device of enmity, slander, and unnatural hatred must be allowed to have had full play, whether the main evidence be held to have been false or true, the removal of the commission to Hampton Court, Norfolk's wooing of the captive queen, and the tortuous, faithless policy of England, are the most engrossing topics of the time of turbulent romantic barbarism, during which the domestic history of Scotland seems to have stood still. But it began to move again with Murray's return from the conferences, where he had gained everything. 'There was to be a little more blustering by Queen Elizabeth about the sacredness of the sovereign and the duty of the subject; but the power of the Protestant government of England was thrown into Murray's cause, and the new settlement of the throne was as firm as any political condition could be in those days of confusion.' The Duke of Chatelherault, with the queen's commission as lieutenant-general of

the kingdom, and Huntly and Argyll as his lieutenants, vainly attempted to oppose his authority: his concentrated and well-ordered force was too strong for them. He put down the Border disturbances with a strong hand, so that an old chronicler says: 'There is such obedience made by the said thieves to the said Regent, as the like was never done to na king in na man's days of before.' At this time the country was visited by a fearful pestilence, and, as usual, the people blamed their rulers for the occurrence. Murray was a man with whom one does not feel much personal sympathy, but he certainly possessed the governing faculty; and the inversion of social relations caused by political convulsion considered, he has less brutal characteristics than his contemporaries.

His premature death was doubtless a misfortune for the country and the young king, perhaps even for poor Mary herself, whose imprudently expressed satisfaction certainly did her harm, and was one of the rare occasions on which passion overcame her fine sense of decorum and good feeling. One of the most shocking incidents of this calamity is the deliberate opinion of John Knox, that the only blot in the Regent's character was his lenity to his sister—an opinion which he addressed to the Deity in prayer, lamenting 'that foolish pity did so far prevail in him concerning execution and punishment, which Thou commanded to have executed upon her and her accomplices.' Mr Hill Burton briefly disposes of the legendary story of the injury done the family by the Regent, which has been assigned as the motive for James Hamilton of Bothwellhaugh's assassination of Murray. From the 'balcony with hangings' of Archbishop Hamilton's house, the Regent was shot, and his murder inaugurated the first real civil war in Scotland, whose respective leaders were 'the queen's party' under the Hamiltons, and the king's party under Lennox, his grandfather. This unnatural quarrel had every element of misery and evil in it, and its brief duration was the greatest mercy to the unhappy people. The story is romantic and barbarous, like all that went before. The capture of John Hamilton, Archbishop of St Andrews, at the taking of Dumbarton Castle; his ignominious execution, an act of vengeance rather than justice; the march of the queen's party on Stirling, where the child-king was, and where the parliament was sitting; the attack on the castle, and the death of Lennox, follow with great rapidity. Lennox lived some hours after his wound, and his last words are recorded. They referred to 'his poor wife Meg,' the daughter of Angus and of Margaret Tudor. 'Some thirty years earlier,' says the author, 'the love which Lennox and the high-born maiden bore to each other was an element of purity and gentleness, in a household credited with dark political intrigues. In the after-life, which was so closely mixed with the horrible story of their son's career, the light still burned, and it brightened the last scene of all.'

Mar succeeded Lennox, and the war continued through three eventful years—years of fiery activity and unsparing denunciation on the part of John Knox, of strenuous effort and intrigue on the part of Lethington—years during which the stirring romance of Grange was evolved, which witnessed his cruel death, and the termination of Knox's life, and left Morton in supreme power. Murray, Lennox, Mar, Lethington, Grange, Knox, his foes,

his friends, and his rivals, all were gone, and there was a free arena to act his own part in. 'He was one of those,' says the writer, 'to whom a coadjutor powerful enough to be a rival is almost a greater hindrance than an avowed rival. As to his personal character, purity of life, justice, and mercy had no place in his moral nature. But he had firmness, business capacity, and a scorn of danger, and these were the qualities needed for Scotland. He put the country in order, and gave it peace.'

At this point—after the narrative of twelve wonderful years, unparalleled in history for their plenitude of events, for their changes, their tragic scenes, the fierce strife of passions they had witnessed, and the wild, strong, criminal men whom they successively raised to power—comes a sudden lull, and thenceforth the character of Scottish history is entirely changed. It loses its distinctive, barbaric features, and is merged in the general story of political progress and national life. The game of conquest was entirely played out by England, and the two nations were peacefully to become one. The ancient league with France was over, all its long romance of heroism and kindly sympathy was at an end. Many hearts in Scotland were, no doubt, secretly devoted still to Queen Mary, but her name had passed out of the arena of political discussion.

The young king, one of a race doomed to disaster, but the most prosperous, in some senses, of them all—the son of a murdered father—the grandson of two slain men—whose mother was to die on a scaffold, whose son was to die a like weird, whose line was to end in exile, in whose family unnatural strife and ingratitude were heirlooms—the little king fared well through all this troublous time. He was kept as safely from the dangers of the civil war as his mother had been devoutly guarded against the foreign enemy. The story of his youth—under the guardianship of Mar and Morton, and the stern rule of George Buchanan—is interesting. Buchanan is said to have answered to the charge that he had made the king a pedant, that it was the best he could make of him. Mr Burton says there is evidence that at least he strove to make him something infinitely higher—to make him a great constitutional monarch, 'a patriot king,' after the notion of kingly duty which the teacher had drunk in from classical sources. Writing of Buchanan's works, and their effect on his pupil, the author says: 'He was singularly unfortunate in his immediate object. The king, who spoke respectfully of his genius and scholarship, uttered his detestation of his teacher's opinions in words not to be misunderstood. When he followed so far the example of his teacher as to set down a code of conduct for his son when he should ascend the throne, it was in the way of an antidote to the poison of the teaching of Buchanan. Could he prophetically have foreseen the events of the next century, he might have found his opinions exercising an influence powerful enough to appal even their author. His precepts were cited by his countrymen when they began the Great Rebellion, and thence down to the Revolution—they were ever on the lips of the opponents of the Stewarts.'

The later days of the Regency were troubled by church difficulties, of which the details belong to the very driest domain of history; and its expiry took place amid all the prosperity of peace and a strong government. The well-known story of the

crown jewels, and the bitter strife which their recovery entailed, lends a lighter tinge to the work at this period; and in the arrival of Esmé Stewart, Lord of Aubigné, a son of a brother of Lennox, and consequently James's cousin, and the king's impetuous affection for him, there is the first indication of the dangerous tendency to favouritism which brought King James subsequently into such lamentable contempt and disrepute. For a parallel to the execution of Morton, compassed and procured by this ambitious and wicked man—made Duke of Lennox by the weak king—we must look back to that of Somerset—the uncle, the guide, the friend of the boy-king of England, Edward VI. It is one of the worst deeds of a bad time, but also a signal instance of retribution. His brutal, unmanly enmity to the queen was amply punished now. The pretext was the old convenient one—the murder of Darnley; and there was hardly a decent pretence of evidence. He met his death with dignity, though the bitterness of it was aggravated by a deputation of clergymen, who harassed him with thirteen questions on points of conscience and conduct.

The first adventure of personal interest in King James's history is that known as 'the Raid of Ruthven,' when he was taken prisoner by the Master of Glamis at a hunting-party, in accordance with a plot headed by Lennox and Arran. It was, in fact, a revolution, which, after ten months, was swept away by a counter-revolution. Mr Hill Burton tells us the complicated story, with its collateral political bearings, English and French, with clear conciseness, for which we cannot be too grateful. James never forgot or forgave this outrage, and its effects were destined to be visible in the present fall of Gowrie, and in the dreadful succeeding incidents. No more curious figure moves across the crowded stage of this strange history than that of Lord Ruthven, the man who aided his father in the horrid murder of Rizzio, under Darnley's command, and afterwards did violence to Darnley's son. We find him, after the fall of Gowrie, wandering over the borders of the Tay, the patrimony of his house, pensive in the prospect of bidding farewell to them and his gallery, 'but newly built and decorated with pictures'—a rare possession for a Scots baron of that period. He was classical in his tastes; and in his communings with a friend, who joined him in his solitude, he moralised, in the words of Mantuan Melibæus, on who may be the rude stranger who is to possess the fields beloved in vain. His trial and execution—the vile treatment his wife and sons sustained at the hands of Arran, who, with his infamous wife, plays a dastardly part in the events of the time, and the embassy to England of the Master of Gray, a youthful Judas among diplomatists, to whom, in our belief, the tragic termination of the cruel drama of the poor queen's life was mainly owing, bring us to the league with England, which forms so conspicuous a landmark in the history of both countries.

On the 8th February 1587, Mary Queen of Scots was beheaded. The conduct of her son during the interval when Elizabeth was maturing this great crime was simply execrable. He faintly remonstrated, and made a weak pretence of anger; but he would do nothing to risk his chance of the crown of England. Perhaps he was as well content as his envoys, when, at that incredibly hideous scene, in

which Elizabeth vented her rage against her victim in horrid oaths, she refused a respite for further communications. 'I spake,' says Sir Robert Melville, 'craving that her [Queen Mary's] life may be spared for fifteen days; she refused. Then for eight days; she said: "Not for an hour," and so gied her away.' Four months after his mother's execution, King James came of age, and celebrated the event by a banquet at Holyrood, where he united all the heads of the feudal houses at strife with one another, and there were great rejoicings thereat, likewise for the destruction of the Spanish Armada. Soon after, the one romance of which he is the hero finds its place in his life. In this is the only trait of resemblance between James and his son. The Danish expedition and that famous visit to Madrid belong to the poetry of history.

Queen Elizabeth strongly opposed James's resolution to marry the Danish princess, Anne; but in this matter he would not be controlled; and when the brilliant little fleet sent to bring the bride home was so beaten by storms that it had to run into a port in Norway for safety, he set sail for Norway, to rescue Anne 'from the thralldom of the sea,' leaving behind him an explanatory document, which is one of the oddest fruits of his eccentric brain. He joined his bride at Upsala, November 19, 1589, and remained there some time. The English gentry of that day were hard drinkers, so were the Scots; but both beheld with admiring amazement the feats of the Danish courtiers. James was very candid in his accounts of the revels. The royal couple arrived in Scotland in May 1590, and were received with much rejoicing. The adventures of the younger Bothwell, the fortunes of 'the Popish Lords,' and the church revival and final establishment of discipline, fill the space between James's one romance and his greatest crime. Mr Hill Burton tells the ever mysterious story of 'the Gowrie Conspiracy' with admirable point, and impartially; but he does not admit that the theory that the conspiracy was one to ruin the house of Gowrie, not a plot on their side at all, is tenable.

The great event to which James had looked all his life was near. Queen Elizabeth died, and his succession to the throne was announced. It is strange that she never saw him, and he never made any attempt to see the great queen. On the 5th April 1603, King James, with a large train of attendants, left Edinburgh; on the 6th May he entered London, after a royal progress diversified by pageantry, hunting, feasting, mummery, all the cumbrous diversions of the day, for the most part marked by profligate excess, and uniformly indecorous. He was not an edifying monarch, and both his appearance and manners were extremely repulsive, not to say disgusting. He was as greedy of gifts as his predecessor, and as inordinately conceited about his own infallible wisdom. Sir Anthony Weldon's description of him is that of a shambling lout, most repulsive to look upon; and, not to go farther into his personal habits, it is sufficient to know that he 'never washed himself.'

In one of the most admirable passages of his work, Mr Hill Burton draws a powerful picture of James—physical, moral, and intellectual—a picture which has all the sharp antithesis of Macaulay's, but is more profound, more thorough,

and more just. His account of Queen Anne is most interesting; and the sketches of the royal household are even pathetic when one thinks of the destiny of its members, of whom Prince Henry, for whose early death so much regret was felt, was the happiest.

Once more we come to ecclesiastical affairs, in which the king shewed himself extremely despotic, from the instant when he had secure power; and are given the details of another famous Hampton Court Conference, to the discontent and sufferings of the bishops, and the reappearance of the Popish Lords. Then Mr Hill Burton takes up the history of the Highlands, and we are again in a region of romantic interest, watching the progress of one of the chief missions of the consolidated powers following on the union of the English and Scottish crowns—that is, to bring Ireland and the Highlands to conformity with the rest of the empire, whether by displacing the Celt or by socially regenerating him. The long course of strife and cruelty consequent on this purpose is familiar to all. In one instance, the Scottish, it has long been only traditional; in another, the Irish, its reversal dates from the commencement of the present half-century. In 1617, King James visited Scotland, and was received with great pomp. He had some trouble on the everlasting church question, in which he acted with his customary despotism. In 1621, the Five Articles of Perth were carried in the Assembly, and there was a truce to discord for the time being. The discreditable religious squabbles of this period furnish but dreary reading, pleasantly varied by the creation of the province of Nova Scotia, and the colonisation projects, destined later to such great success, to each stage of which Scotland has steadily contributed.

King James died March 27, 1625, and with his queer figure and eccentric character, much of the distinctive interest and all the enlivening whimsicality of the narrative disappear. Thenceforth, the political sphere is more narrow and more crowded, and the stern face of revolution, persecution, bloody resistance, and mortal struggle shews itself. In November 1625, first Edinburgh, and then all Scotland were stirred by a royal proclamation of King Charles. It announced a general revocation by the new king of all grants by the crown, and all acquisitions to the prejudice of the crown, whether before or after his father's Act of Annexation in 1587. 'This,' says Mr Burton, 'was virtually the proclamation of that contest of which King Charles was destined never to see the end.' He then proceeds to describe the full extent of its results, and adds: 'The armed contest which broke forth twelve years afterwards had so much more attraction for the world, that this, virtually the first act of war, has received scant attention, and therefore whatever elucidates its immediate impression and influence is valuable.' To the resumption of the church revenues rapidly succeeded the imposition of ritualism, abhorrent to the great majority of the Scots; then Laud's dictation, general preparation for aggression, meddling and dictation of an insensate kind, and the swift rising of a reactionary spirit. The disastrous story of Laud, beginning with the late king's instinctive dread of him, down to the promulgation, with Charles's imperious mandate, of 'Laud's Liturgy,' has never been more lucidly or impartially told. With the Liturgy tumults, the overt results of

Charles's incredible rashness and obstinacy began, and they grew more apparent and more formidable with every event of the ensuing three years, until, in 1638, we reach the memorable era of the Covenant and the awful tragedy of the burning of Frendraught, the unsurpassed crime of the Crichtons.

The concluding volume of Mr Hill Burton's work deals largely with the great conflict in the north, which history, poetry, and romance, the words of soldiers and statesmen, and the eloquence of divines, have illustrated, explained, enriched, and preserved. These chapters are of especial value to the student; and the writer's estimate of Montrose is one of his most original and most valuable passages. The story of the Great Rebellion, in its Scottish aspects, is perfectly set forth, and the contrast between the attitude of England and that of Scotland, when the king was executed, is admirably drawn. 'To the actors on the public stage in Scotland the long contest had been on purely public grounds, religious or political. It had not become, as in England, a personal struggle for life or death. The long dangerous game of fast and loose which had been played with those who, from the opening of the Long Parliament, had been in one shape or other at enmity with the court, convinced them that no treaty or other adjustment or promise would make their lives secure while the king lived. In Scotland, on the other hand, the party opposed to him had all along a preponderance so overwhelming that the leaders of it had nothing personally to fear. There are many testimonies to this, but one is conclusive, that while the balance was vibrating between the two sides in England, the Scots lent their army to their friends of the Parliamentary party; and it was only while this army was absent on duty elsewhere that the Cavalier party were able to take the field.' Immediately after the news of the execution had reached Edinburgh, Charles II. was solemnly proclaimed at the cross as 'king of Great Britain, France, and Ireland;' but he was not permitted to enter on duty until he became an assured Covenantant. The execution of Hamilton and Huntly followed fast upon that of the king; and then came the wonderful wanderings, the capture, and the execution of Montrose. 'He was removed to Edinburgh, where, of course, he could expect no mercy,' says the historian simply. And indeed he found none. The whole revolting sentence was carried out to the utmost on the 25th May 1650. On the 3d July, King Charles, escaping some danger from the cruisers of the Republic, arrived at the mouth of the Spey. The hopeless struggle with Cromwell's invading army began, and the victory of Dunbar gave him the command of the open country south of the Forth. The battle of Worcester and the siege of Dundee were the final efforts of a hopeless cause; the 'young man' was disposed of, and Scotland under the Commonwealth closes the General Assembly, incorporates the Union, and establishes free trade between herself and England. Peace and prosperity prevailed for a while, and there was no difficulty made when the Restoration was accomplished by Monk.

Mr Hill Burton devotes considerable space to the consideration of the Social Progress of Scotland from the Reformation to the Restoration. These chapters, which are exhaustive, philosophi-

cal, and critical, are a pleasant interlude in the narrative of events, and enable the reader to form a perfect mental picture of the social and intellectual condition of the country at the commencement of the actual reign of Charles II., just as, in his earlier volumes, he summarised the progress of events and influences at previous marked epochs. His account of the popular superstitions and 'witchcraft' is particularly interesting. The active part of the Restoration belongs to the history of England, so Mr Hill Burton passes it over, and goes on to the resumption of the committee of Estates, the Navigation Act, and the ever recurring religious troubles, to the story of Sharp, his negotiations in the Presbyterian cause, and return as Archbishop of St Andrews, the meeting of the Estates, the establishment of the episcopal hierarchy, and the sacrifice of the three representative victims, Argyll, Guthrie, and Warriston. In the following chapter, amid many other personages and events, the unfortunate Archbishop Sharp and his murder have prominent places, and we find with delight John Balfour of Burley. Turning now to the west country, we have the lamentable history of conventicles, the arming of the peasantry in the insurrection of 1679, Graham of Claverhouse, the battle of Bothwell Bridge, the Popish Ryehouse and assassination plots, the Succession and Test Acts, the strife of religious parties, and the excommunication of the king. With the accession of James VII., the story gets more and more gloomy, but increases in interest. Monmouth's rebellion is finely related, also the insurrection of Argyll and his execution. Then comes the wretched narrative of the folly, the cruelty, and the bigotry of the last king of the long line of the Stewarts of Scotland, the infatuated man who wore out the seemingly deathless tradition of fidelity to his race, who tortured and wearied Scotland, terrified at relentless persecution, and the prospect of a continuance of similar rule, till it watched with hope the great events which followed the landing of the Prince of Orange, and frankly co-operated with England in the construction of the Revolution Settlement.

THE REIGN OF OUR CZAR PETER.

FROM his first arrival in Peter Doolahan's dinner-basket, to the melancholy hour of his death, Czar Peter tyrannised over our household as completely as any tyrant over serf. He differed, however, from his great namesake in other respects, particularly with regard to cleanliness; in fact, fully one-third of his time was spent in washing his face. If Peter the Great was celebrated for the bump of constructiveness, Peter the Little could out-balance it with one of destructiveness. On one occasion, he chopped up a valuable cloth cloak. The buttons proved too strong for his teeth, otherwise I am quite sure they wouldn't have interfered with his digestion. Nothing came amiss in that respect, from a pair of hunting 'tops' to (I blush to say it) Aunt Sophia's false chignon.

Nevertheless, from the drawing-room to the stables, he was the pet of the family, save and except with Biddy the cook; and I'm bound to say there was no love lost between them. Many a blessing did she bestow on Doolahan for bringing in that 'ugly mis-chie-e-vious baste.'

We called him Peter out of compliment to the

donor, and Uncle Christopher added Czar, to make it aristocratic. He couldn't have been more than a day or two old, for he was scarcely so large as a newly-born kitten; but unlike those mewling little quadrupeds, he was lively as a cricket, and quite able to take care of himself. We boys used to carry our new pet up-stairs every night for a week or more. It was like a procession. Tom went first, a candle in one hand, a jug of milk in the other; Kit followed with the nursery spirit-lamp and feeding-apparatus; while your humble servant brought up the rear, with the Czar in a basket of freshly-cut grass. The wonder is that we didn't set the house on fire during His Royal Hi—no, His Majesty's babyhood. If majesty's not the word, pray, supply it as you read.

The business of nursing lasted a week, as I said before—when, behold! we discovered him eating his bed. The vagabond treated our hot milk with contempt, so, from that night, he slept in the scullery. His youthful mind was so unformed, that, contrary to the natural instinct of his kind, he made himself at home at once. Ponto, Duck, and Ginger were each introduced to the new-comer in proper form; that is to say, they first peeped at the Czar, and then got a sound whipping. The dogs understood matters perfectly after the third ceremony, and never molested the little stranger afterwards. Indeed, they became such firm friends that no other dog dare attempt to chase him, if they knew it.

We boys were very fond of the Czar, but he never attached himself to us as he did to Doolahan. When Doolahan went to the bog, to bring home turf, the Czar might be seen perched on the load; and if any one took the trouble to watch the cart, they might see him skipping off and snatching a mouthful of fresh grass whenever the fancy tempted him. Or Ginger and he might be found in the empty cart, both snugly curled up in Doolahan's frieze coat. Aunt Sophia was another favourite. I suspect it was because she always wore a black silk dress. He delighted in beating his fore-paws against the silk, and, strange to say, he never ate it.

Night was his play-time. Woe be to any one careless enough to leave their door open! No acrobat could beat him at Catherine-wheels or somersaults. And he always preferred a bed with somebody in it for the scene of his operations. He never shewed a predilection for the spare room unless there was a visitor in it.

Once, the governor was near losing one of his best agencies through the Czar's imprudence. Miss Tabitha Bullion came down for a day or two to inspect her estates and gather up her money. The governor was so anxious to do her honour that he had the best bedroom newly furnished on purpose. Miss (she called herself Mrs) Bullion was good-natured looking enough, but her maid was more trouble than if she had belonged to the royal family.

The Czar must have been thinking of 'Long-fellow,' and fancied he was standing on the bridge at midnight, when he skipped on Miss Caroline M'Kintey's back. The maids forgot to see that he was shut up. There was what Biddy called *millemurder* in the house that night.

Miss M'Kintey was tragical in her wrath; she threatened to give a month's warning on the spot. Her mistress was humbly submissive, and earnestly

anxious to learn who had dared to insult her, through her servant. The governor came down in dressing-gown and slippers, his revolver ready for action. Mrs Bullion and Miss M'Kintey, discomposed by the reflection that their attire was more airy than decent, retreated into a linen-closet, about five feet by four, as the only place of security.

The insolence of that maid! She actually thought it was the young gentlemen, as if we would bother our heads playing tricks on such a Death's-head! Her mistress suggested thieves, or the knife-boy. The governor put on his spectacles, and holding the candle without a tremor, searched the bedrooms thoroughly, but fruitlessly, when, 'Oh—oh—boo! The devil's in the house!' Both ladies rush out of the linen-closet, regardless of costume, while the Czar skips along the corridor, a piece of Miss M'Kintey's garment dangling from his mouth.

Explanations and apologies followed. The terrified old tabbies retired. There was no more fun to be seen from the top banister; and we boys followed their example, when Czar Peter came up and knocked at our door. You may guess we let him in at once, for fear of another row. We subscribed a whole shilling between us for little Tommy Goraghan, the tinker's son, because he snared a young wife for His Highness. Alas! 'the best-laid schemes o' mice and men gang aft agley.' Judy proved a termagant, and refused all overtures of peace. We put her in a chicken-coop, gave her an abundance of dandelion, haws, &c.; but all to no purpose; she ate up her husband's share of the dainties, but obstinately refused to make friends with him. He exerted all his powers to make himself agreeable; but when kindness failed, he nearly beat her to death—he made a drum of her.

We kept her a fortnight, and then let her out. All our hopes of a reconciliation were blasted; and, between ourselves, the Czar seemed heartily glad to get rid of her, and be able to go back in comfort to his old friend Ginger. The fact was, she was too old to be tamed. We never tried another matrimonial experiment.

Czar Peter had a most unconquerable predilection for sweets. He would skip on the breakfast-table, and steal the sugar or cream, but he never broke anything unless vexed. Once, indeed, Uncle Christopher slapped him for putting his nose in a glass of claret. It was very ill-tempered of Uncle Kit. He knew the poor fellow only skipped on the table to get a few cherries, and being of an inquisitive turn of mind, he wanted to know if the wine was good. What was the consequence? He kicked every glass and decanter off the table, overturned a dish of preserves on Uncle Kit's dress-coat, and skipped out of the window with a bunch of cherries during the turmoil. The governor was furious. He vowed he'd shoot him; but Uncle Kit begged hard for him, and took all the blame on himself; while Aunt Sophia pleaded so earnestly that he might be forgiven, that we liked her twice as well, if that were possible, ever after.

The Czar had two or three narrow escapes from strange dogs; but the narrowest escape of all was one day the harriers met unexpectedly near us, for Peter Doolahan always took precautions to keep him out of danger on these occasions. The harriers, huntsmen, and all were hallooing, blowing horns, and making all sorts of detestable noises

round the house before there was time even to whistle for the Czar. Most boys love a hare-hunt, but to us it sounded the death-knell of our pet. Aunt Sophia was nearly in hysterics. Peter Doolahan went off through the turnip-field in hopes of finding his favourite before the hounds; but no one thought of doing what little Tommy Goraghan did.

Tommy was accustomed to rely on his wits, and now they didn't fail him. He strutted up to Mr F—, the master of the hounds, as bold as a jack-daw, and pulling his shock head, requested an audience. Master Tommy never told distinctly what he said, but no doubt Aunt Sophia figured in the speech, for he brought back word Mr F— wouldn't *inconvenience* a lady's *pit* not on no account. The horn was sounded immediately, and the enemy disappeared. Aunt Sophia was doubly overwhelmed, first at Tommy's impudence, lastly with joy at his success. Tommy got his choice of a new suit of clothes, or a one-pound note for his mammy. With much filial affection, he chose the money in preference to the clothes, arguing, that, as he never had new clothes in his life, he couldn't miss them, and a pound would do a power for them all if daddy didn't drink it.

But where was the Czar all this time? We searched every field, furrow, and trench. The dogs were 'unfortunately away with the governor, so there was nothing for it but to wait till they came home, had not Tommy come again to our assistance. He wisely argued that so long as we made such a row the Czar would be afraid to shew; so we left him to mount guard, and went in to dinner. We were scarcely at table when Tommy shouted at the window: 'Come, Masther Kit, Masther Clon, come quick! I've found him, the darlint!' And so he had. The Czar was crouched in a little tuft of furze, neither in hole nor corner, but in the middle of an open field. Tommy spied him peeping out, and was wise enough not to go near or alarm His Majesty. Aunt Sophia brought him home in her arms; the poor little animal was shrunk to half his size; for days he would jump into Aunt Sophia's lap at the slightest noise, and large tears would roll down his face. From that time, nothing would induce him to go out without the dogs. Poor little Czar! the dogs, with all their good-will, couldn't save him at last. Who could believe in a human being killing a dumb animal through revenge!

In the first pages of this story, I told how Peter Doolahan was in the habit of taking Czar Peter with the dogs to the bog. Like most Irishmen, Peter was fond of his joke. Mark Langton always went by the sobriquet of the Swallow, because he was only seen at certain times of the year. Some people thought he was English, others said he was Scotch, because he had a red head; at any rate no person cared to ask him. My own opinion is, that the man had been in one or other of the American armies. His manners were decidedly forbidding, nevertheless it was whispered that, not content with one wife, he lived in constant dread of a prosecution for bigamy. Verily, some women have queer tastes. It was supposed he was either in hiding, or else living with wife number two—or perhaps three—during these absences. Peter, in passing Mark Langton's cottage, made some joking allusion about its being nearly time for another trip to the north, advising his wife to

follow him, because swallows always travel with their mates. Czar Peter, chopping up a bunch of dandelion on the bank, suggested a means of retaliation. The brute was pitching manure at the moment, and before Peter Doolahan could spring from his cart, the poor hare was pinned through the heart, the pitchfork fastening him to the bank. Mark Langton uttered but one sentence: 'You'll mind your own business next time.' Uncle Kit was for prosecuting the savage, but Aunt Sophia advised peace, lest worse might happen. One year afterwards, that man was tried for manslaughter, committed in mad passion; and is at the present moment undergoing his term of imprisonment for ten years.

Doolahan brought home the body; he described himself as too stunned, or, as he expressed it, *struck of a heap*, even to *speak* to Langton. Czar Peter lies under his favourite cherry-tree; and Uncle Kit carved his name on the trunk. Poor Czar Peter!

FAIRIES.

WHEN breezes sleep
In the purple folds of the murmuring deep,
And the silver kiss
Of the high moon plays on the glen's abyss,
And bright-tracked stars
Suddenly shoot from their ebony cars
To the Nymphs that dance
On a pavement of glass in the sea's expanse;
When the soft Night doth seem
Sound in the arms of Silence to dream,
Then Fairies rove
By the solemn hills through field and grove,
To the moonbeam glide,
Or upward and down on the swell's smooth tide,
Or print the green;
Till sceptred Aurora, the Northern Queen,
To watch them play,
On her rosed and lightning plumes will stay,
And their mazes, light
As the iris that flies from the foam-cloud white,
Such harmony win
From whispering trees, and sedge-grown linn,
And sighing cave,
That Sorrow doth listen, and cease to rave.

Early this month will be issued a Christmas Extra Double Number of *Chambers's Journal*, entitled

THE WINNING HAZARD.

The number will be issued at THREEPENCE, and will, besides, be included in the Monthly Part to be issued at the end of December.

On Saturday, January 7, 1871, will be commenced

WON—NOT WOODED.

By the Author of *Bred in the Bone*.

Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, 47 Paternoster Row, LONDON, and 339 High Street, EDINBURGH. Also sold by all Booksellers.